

THE Asylum

VOL. 36 NO. 3



AUTUMN 2018

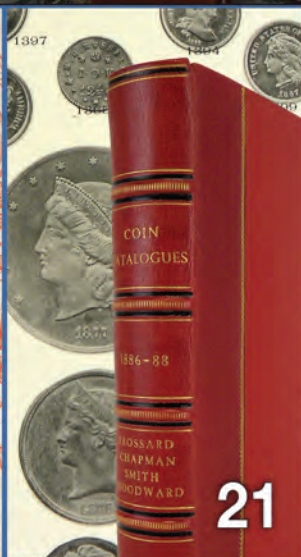
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NBS 2018 Annual Meeting & Symposium

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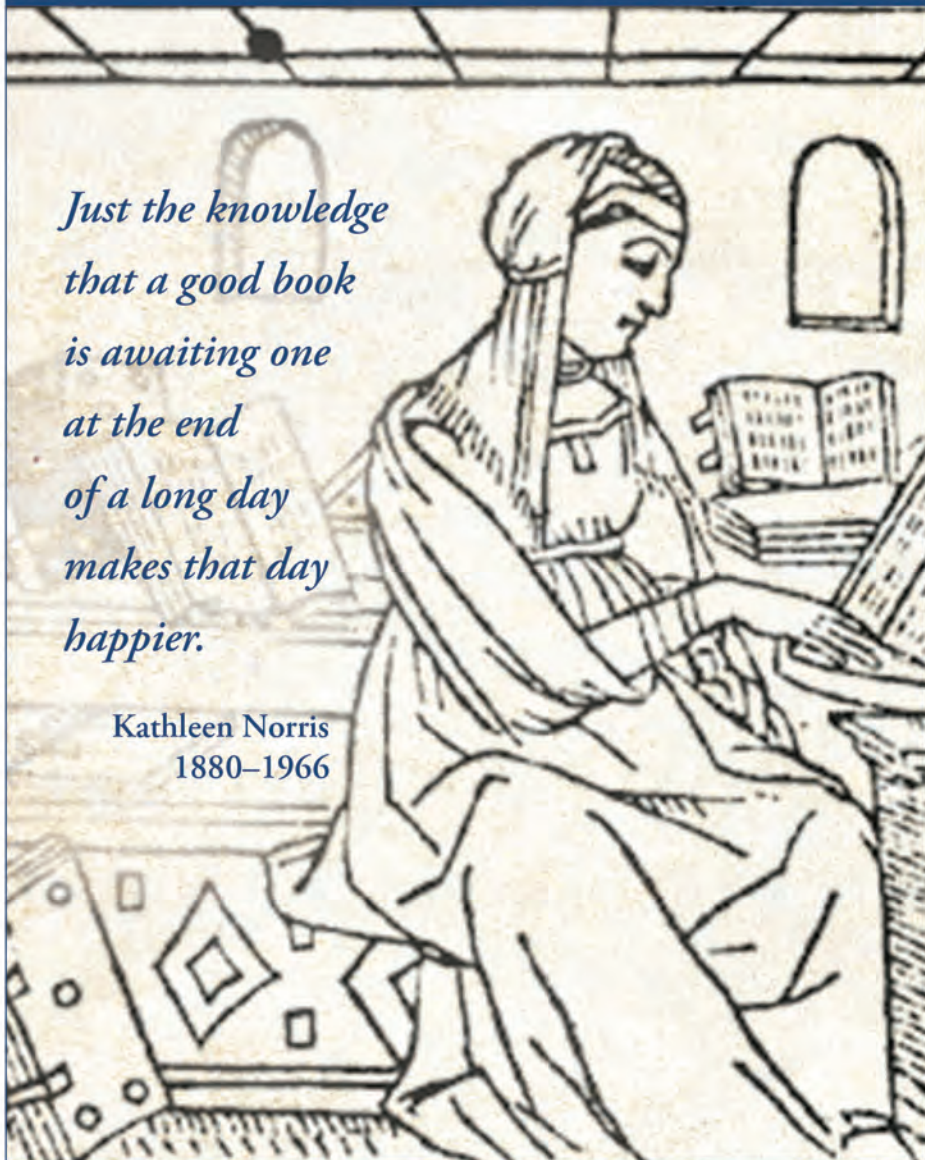
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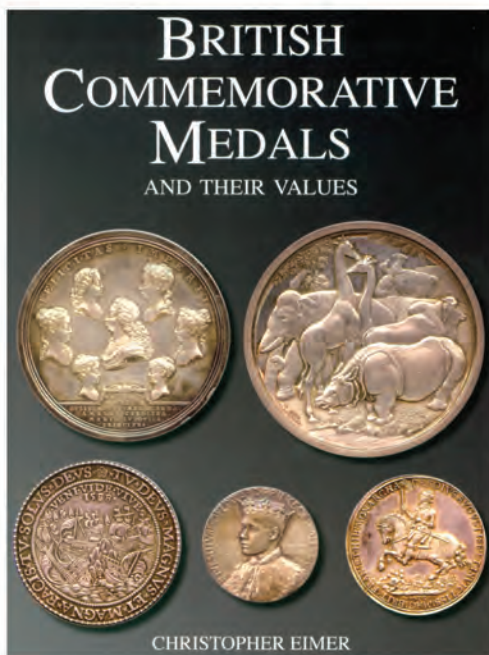
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Numismatic Bibliomania Society

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Tom Harrison
NBS President

Message from the President

In this issue I would like to share a few observations and thoughts from our NBS events at the ANA Convention in Philadelphia. The week provided a number of opportunities for numismatic bibliophiles to gather and enjoy our fine hobby.

This year we renewed our tradition of hosting a club table. The table, located next to literature dealers Charles Davis and Kolbe and Fanning, offered literature enthusiasts a chance to meet, enjoy a marvelous Chapman Brothers M.A. Brown Sale display, view Friday's auction items and purchase NBS souvenir coffee mugs. I would like to thank those who manned the table and encouraged new members to join the club.

This year we had over twice the number of donors to the NBS benefit auction as compared to 2017. There was an amazing variety of quality lots that sparked spirited bidding on many items. These donors, coupled with twenty enthusiast bidders, raised over \$9000! This was certainly a testament to our members' commitment to the mission of the NBS.

On Thursday I was honored to accept the ANA Outstanding Club Publication second place award for *The Asylum*. To quote Caleb Noel, Managing Editor, of *The Numismatist*, "We had a large number of submissions this year, and your publication stood out from the rest!" Congratulations to our talented and dedicated editor Maria Fanning and all of the fine authors.

I was pleased to see three exhibits in the numismatic literature category this year. There were also a number of other displays that included literature to enhance their exhibits with one four case award winner using two cases of books.

For a full report of the NBS Symposium and General Meeting please read Joel Orosz's fine accounts in this issue. For most conventioners time is precious as they attempt to connect with friends, visit favorite dealers, check out collector displays, attend club meetings, take advantage of educational opportunities and the list goes on. The NBS is fortunate to have many dedicated members who generously gave of their time, talents and resources to assure the success of our events. Reflecting on the week, I was most gratified to see a greater membership participation in our events that demonstrated an increased vitality in the NBS.

THANK YOU for a week of numismatic biblio fun and fellowship! May your numismatic library provide investigation, discovery, and most of all, enjoyment.



Congratulations to This Year's Award Winners!

*And many thanks to all NBS members who contributed
to our award-winning publications!*

The Asylum Award Winners

Jack Collins Award

Best Article by a First-Time Author in 2017:

Alan Workman

“Fred Lake: A Bookseller’s Retrospective” (v.35 n.1)

Joel J. Orosz Award

Best Article of 2017:

Joel J. Orosz

“Associations: Autographs • Annotations • Inscriptions:
Numismatique du Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis”

NBS Awards of Appreciation

John Nebel

For longtime commitment and service to NBS in hosting
our website and improving *The E-Sylum* presentation and preservation

Bruce Perdue

For longtime commitment and service to NBS in managing
our website and improving *The E-Sylum* presentation and preservation

American Numismatic Association

2018 Outstanding Specialty Numismatic Publication

Second Place

The Asylum, Numismatic Bibliomania Society

Numismatic Bibliomania Society Symposium

August 16, 2018 • Pennsylvania Convention Center, Room 120C

Speaker: Roger Burdette

Title: “Concepts of Numismatic Research:
A Personal Research Approach”

By Joel J. Orosz

The 2018 Numismatic Bibliomania Society Symposium featured accomplished numismatic researcher and author Roger Burdette, author of such classics as *The Renaissance of American Coinage* series, *Truth Seeker*, *The Life of Eric P. Newman*, and the technically virtuosic *From Mine to Mint*, speaking on a topic for which he has repeatedly demonstrated mastery: “Concepts of Numismatic Research: A Personal Research Approach.” Despite the self-limiting subtitle, Roger’s presentation revealed a methodology that would serve any numismatic researcher well. Indeed, as more than one person remarked after his talk, Roger’s methodology would be a useful template for any researcher, on any topic, in any setting.

Roger began by defining numismatic research as “the collection and analysis of data to understand reports or observations made by others, and to test hypotheses concerning causes, effects, or trends that may help to explain past events.” The purpose of numismatic research is to “understand past practices and their relationship to coins and medals, as well as to verify, modify, or challenge earlier publications, locate previously unknown information, and to encourage additional or new research paths.”

Roger proceeded to the necessity of defining the subject or problem to be researched, and stressed that it should be a subject in which the researcher is personally interested. The researcher needs to decide what must be learned about the subject, and practice the self-discipline of limiting the scope of the research, for it is better to start small and expand than to start big and lose focus.



Chuck Heck and Garrett Ziss at the NBS Symposium.

Photo courtesy Wayne Homren

He shared a hierarchy of information sources, from most reliable to least. The most reliable sources are primary, which are rarely to be found online. Primary sources are the testimony of eye- or ear-witnesses, original Mint or Treasury documents, and the personal papers of participants. Less reliable secondary sources, which often can be found both in print and online, include books, periodicals, newspapers, encyclopedias, and reviews of research.

Roger injected a cautionary note: most internet sources are outdated in whole or in part, and most commercial sources display a strong bias toward selling rather than informing. Auction catalogs often use facts and imagination indiscriminately to motivate buyers. On the other hand, most U.S. Mint-generated documents were created for internal use, and are of high reliability. Letters from the Mint to ordinary citizens, however, are not necessarily complete or accurate, and Mint press releases are usually incomplete or misleading.

His introduction completed, Roger turned to how to begin. A preliminary investigation requires identifying and reading prior work on your topic. Look online and in hobby publications, read and copy everything pertinent you can find, even if it is repetitious or outdated, for at this point the important thing is to collect data, not analyze it.

In this preliminary phase, it is important to keep careful track of all sources. Construct a bibliography of all published material, including notes related to each, such as errors, and assessment of overall reliability. Be skeptical of information found on all commercial sites. Even non-commercial sites, like the Newman Numismatic Portal (NNP), require some caution, for although NNP is highly reliable in general, it is a repository; its content is not curated for accuracy.

It is important to sift through findings. Focus on non-sales-oriented sites, published articles, and names of recognized hobby authorities. Remember that not all sites listed on the first page or two of search results will be reliable. With a little practice the researcher will start to develop a feel for which sites contain useful numismatic data, and which are just selling smoke.

The last step in the preliminary phase is to consolidate data from several sites. Extract it by asking the five classic journalist questions:

Who was involved?

What was done?

When was it done?

Where was it done?

Why was it done?

Often, tables or diagrams can be very helpful in sorting and consolidating preliminary data.

Roger then moved to the heart of the research process: that of “striking gold” in archives. It is crucial to remember that no matter what the archive—national congressional, university, or state—you will need to have defined and delimited your area of search beforehand. You cannot expect to have archival workers locate everything on your topic.

Begin with results from your “who, what, when, where and why” questions.

What is your subject?

Where and When to narrow your search to a place and time?

Who identifies participants and decision makers?

Why it is part of the answer for which you are searching?

Research libraries and archives have strict regulations about accessing and using materials. Expect to register, follow their many rules, pass through security screening before you enter, and again before you leave, and in between expect constant scrutiny of everything that you do. To take the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) as an example, for the US Mint and Treasury there is no comprehensive paper or electronic index of relevant materials. An archivist will direct you to a finding aid, but it will be so general that you will have to carefully peruse it for descriptions of material of interest. The finding aids, will, however, contain the physical locations of wanted items. You will have to fill out a form to request access to the material, and usually have to wait an hour or more before receiving your order.

In visiting NARA, or any other archive, you should intend to cast a wide net. You want to maximize the amount of data you capture, and minimize the number of visits (and attendant expense) required. You want your captured data to be relocatable (described so clearly as to source that you and other interested researchers can easily find it again). To do this, you will need to simplify your references, and to arrange them so that they can lead you to the same data that can be reused in many different ways.

To maximize the data captured, plan your visit to NARA around the most promising Record Groups and boxes/volumes. Prepare a list of key words to aid in your search, and examine every page and every sheet. Record groups likely to prove most promising include those containing letters sent and received that mention your subject, coinage journals, log books, Directors' Annual Reports, Annual Assay Commission reports, and special assay reports. It is important to note that Mint documents often have only limited organization.

To minimize your number of visits, visually scan documents you access for anything relating directly to your topic; other topics that are related to your topic; unusual or unexpected topics of interest; and participation by prominent people. Be sure to copy or photograph everything of interest, but leave out the extrania.

"A good memory," quipped Roger, "is a wonderful thing, until you forget." That is why it is crucial to make your data relocatable. Start by taking photos of any NARA labels or cards relating to each box or volume. Every document has an "archive home." Place this "home location" on the top of every page that you capture. Be sure to record at least the document's box number and folder number on each page. This location information should be physically added to each document once you are back at home. Once this "home location" is affixed, it will permit you to mix and match documents to different parts of your work without losing their original locations, or historical context. It will also immensely simplify the process of footnoting and building a bibliography.

Once each page is identified by location, you can begin tracking by date and by subject. Digitize every page of every document; identify documents in a manner that makes sense to you. Use the document's date and subject as a file name. For example: "18310129 New Quarters for 1831.pdf" means a date of January 29, 1831, with the given subject of the new quarters for 1831.

You may wish to transcribe the image (converting the image into machine-readable text). Transcription permits automated searching by any word, phrase, or variant, including:

- Boolean
- Phonic
- Fuzzy
- Synonym
- Stemming, etc.

Remember, however, that all handwritten and most typed materials (virtually anything pre-1960) does not produce usable results with present technology.

Optical Character Recognition can transcribe typeset and modern typescript documents. Handwritten materials require human transcription into machine readable text. Research is being funded into automated handwriting recognition, but the funding is not adequate to produce more than a volunteer-driven effort on a shoestring budget, so don't expect results anytime soon.

Your annotations and file information can present opportunities for multiple uses of the same documents. Good source tracking allows you to mix material from many sources without losing the origin of a document. A simple search program or a database will therefore open up multiple uses. The value of multiple uses is demonstrated by several facts:

- Many older official letters are single-subject.

- Correspondence between officials was often also single-subject

- Reports often cover multiple topics within a more general subject such as the condition of a Mint facility.

- Production and statistical reports often include data about multiple subjects such as gold deposits, gold coinage, and exchange of silver coin for gold coin.

Roger then turned his attention to the vital importance of historical data analysis, which he defined as a method of examining and parsing useful information from records and accounts. More generally, it is a methodology to synthesize a large amount of data into a meaningful narrative. In order to analyze, one must:

- Organize information into categories

- Locate patterns or themes

- Develop a coding system to relate documents to each other

Analysis requires you to consistently and correctly answer nine questions:

- Who wrote the document?

- Who was the intended audience?

- What was the story line?

- Why was the document written?

- What type of document was it, or what was its purpose?

- What were the basic assumptions made by its author?

- Can I believe this document?

- What can I learn about the organization or individual who produced this document?

- What does this document mean to my research subject?

- The ninth question begs a document's value to your research: "How does this doc-

ument relate to all of the others?” Answers to your nine questions can be connected to those for each document you have located. As more and more documents are connected, similarities and insights will begin to appear. Irrelevant materials will also become obvious by their lack of connections.

The final step is to take your analysis through to results. Connections will produce information—often new—about your subject. After all related information is collected (remembering always to maintain source metadata for each document), we can learn only by organizing the results. A simple organization plan will help prepare results that others can read and comprehend. The basic categories of such a plan are:

- General background

- Process or coin background

- Present your data and analysis

- Summarize and make conclusions

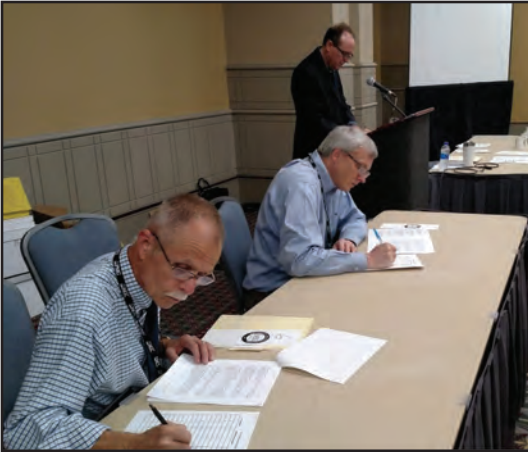
The conclusions themselves flow from four things: factual data; careful analysis; logical results; judicious interpretation. Numismatic research allows investigation of topics and questions that can be studied in no other way. Build your arguments on facts, and always approach each topic as if you were telling the story to others.

A lively question-and-answer session followed Roger’s formal presentation, all of which drilled a bit deeper into one or another of the comprehensive outline points Roger had offered. Participants agreed that Roger Burdette’s Symposium presentation was truly a post-graduate seminar on research theory and practice, provided by the proven master of both, in the realm of numismatic literature.



Bob Evans, Charlie Davis and Len Augsburger at the NBS table.

Photo courtesy Wayne Homren



(Left) Tom Harrison, Len Augsburger and David Fanning running the NBS fundraising auction.

(Below) Dan Hamelberg displays an auction lot.

Photos courtesy Wayne Homren



Lots donated to the NBS fundraising auction by the family of Jack Collins.

Numismatic Bibliomania Society

39th Annual Meeting

August 17, 2018 • Pennsylvania Convention Center, Room 117

By Joel J. Orosz

Any organization with a history fast approaching four decades' duration has had time to develop a number of traditions, mostly for the good, occasionally for ill. The healthy traditions of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society were on full display in Philadelphia during the dog days of 2018; the ill ones were hardly to be found; and a completely new positive tradition was observed aborning, and it is here that the story of 2018 must begin.

For the past 20 or so years that the NBS has held a benefit auction at its annual meeting, the vendue has always occurred after all other business has been concluded. This tradition served the Club well when the list of donated pieces hovered, as it nearly always did, between 20 and 25 lots. A few years back, an innovation occurred when the NBS secured Kolbe & Fanning principal David Fanning's services to catalog donated lots, and distribute said catalog via the good offices of the NBS website and *The E-Sylum* to members who could not attend the benefit auction in person. 2018 brought an unprecedented outburst of generosity among donors, resulting in no fewer than 52 lots of literature in the catalog, with three more arriving after the catalog had been distributed, including two from the family of the late NBS co-founder, Jack Collins. Such a cornucopia demanded a change in tradition; President Tom Harrison and the NBS Board decided that when the Annual Meeting commenced at 11:30 am on Friday August 17, 2018, the benefit auction should lead off the agenda, with the rest of the business following. Cataloger Fanning pulled double duty, serving also as auctioneer Fanning, and met the challenge of selling a lot a minute while still genially running up the bidders for the good of the order.

The auction itself offered so many tempting delicacies that bid paddles were being raised briskly from the first lot on offer, but as the competition entered the home stretch, a couple of notable bidding wars erupted. Lot 52, a 2019 Red Book signed by multitudinous members of Nummis Nova (a northern Virginia numismatic dinner club organized in 2007 by past NBS President Wayne Homren), was hammered for \$110, after a long-back-and-forth between two youthful authors, Kellen Hoard (who eventually prevailed) and one of NBS's newest members, Jerry Lin, the author of *Gold & Silver Coins of China, Standard Catalog 1979-2017*. Just when you thought it might be safe to waggle your bid paddle once more, the final lot (55), one of four leather-bound copies of Jack Collins' never-completed opus 1794: *The History and Genealogy of the First United States Dollar* (one of the lots donated by his family) crossed the block. This exceptional volume occasioned a duel worthy of Hamilton and Burr between Rob Rodriguez and Dan Hamelberg, with the latter prevailing at the auction's

highest realization, of \$2,200. The final take of \$9,300 was the largest realized since the early years of this decade, and was very much in keeping with the traditional generosity of Club members.

The grateful thanks of the NBS go out to the bidders, as well as to the donors of lots: President Tom Harrison, Past President Dan Hamelberg, John Hoskins, Terry Stahurski, Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society, Dave Steine, David Gladfelter, Past President Wayne Homren, David & Maria Fanning, NBS Co-Founder George Frederick Kolbe, Jim Neiswinter, Brad Karoleff, NBS Vice President Len Augsburg, Joel J. Orosz and Len Augsburg, Bob Evans, and the family of our late Co-Founder, Jack Collins. Every donor, of course, was generous in providing lots for the auction, but Past President Hamelberg set a new standard of philanthropy by donating 20 of the 55 lots, not to mention purchasing 7 others, thus making him directly responsible for just under half of all benefit auction transactions. Kudos to all donors and purchasers, for keeping NBS dues affordable, and for providing Maria Fanning, Editor of *The Asylum*, with the wherewithal to keep producing award-winning issues with extremely high production values.

The new membership of Jerry Lin was made possible by a revival of a recently-lapsed NBS tradition. For many years, Howard Daniel single-handedly manned a table for the NBS at ANA conventions, distributing literature and signing up new members. Under the leadership of President Tom Harrison, that tradition was revived in 2018, with the table located, by dispensation of the ANA, not with the other clubs, but rather in the same row and contiguous with numismatic literature dealers Kolbe and Fanning and Charles Davis. Tom and wife Pam stood behind the table on Tuesday of Convention week, Len Augsburg and Joel J. Orosz succeeded them on Wednesday, and Kellen Hoard on parts of Thursday. The table-minders succeeded in signing up 6 new NBS members, sold several NBS commemorative coffee mugs, and also received an unsolicited contribution of \$250 from a coin dealer who wishes to remain anonymous.

Another NBS tradition of long-standing is to congratulate its accomplished members who win numismatic awards in the wider world. Leading this year's cavalcade of honorees was *The Asylum's* Editor, Maria Fanning, whose superb portfolio of issues was justly honored by the American Numismatic Association, which conferred upon *The Asylum* Second Place in the always hotly-contested "Outstanding Specialty Numismatic Publication" category. The ANA's literary awards were also well-populated with NBS stalwarts. John Nebel was named winner of the inaugural Prue and Arthur Fitts Award for Ancient and Medieval Coinage Studies, for his article "Head to Head" in the August 2017 issue of *The Numismatist*, thus giving rise to the inevitable witicism that, from now until August of 2019, "if you've seen one Fitts Award winner, you've seen 'em all." Past President Pete Smith, Joel J. Orosz, and Len Augsburg swept top honors for both the Heath Literary Award for outstanding articles, and the Wayte and Olga Raymond Memorial Literary Award for articles demonstrating original and comprehensive research, for their collaboration, "A More Accurate History of the 1792 Half Disme," published in the August 2017 issue of *The Numismatist*. Messrs. Augsburg and Orosz, along with lead author David Finkelstein, also won the John Reich Collectors Society Jules Reiver Literary Award for 2018, for their ar-

ticle, “The Director’s Deposits: Contemporary Mint Ledgers Positively Identify who Provided the Silver Bullion for the 1794 Silver Dollars,” published in the September 2017 issue of *The Numismatist*. Kellen Hoard won first place in the Junior Division of National History Day for his paper, “17 Years: Developing the United States Coinage System.”



Len Augsburg and Joel Orosz at the NBS table.

Photo courtesy Wayne Homren

The obverse of the tradition of external awards is the tradition of internal awards. Every year, the NBS honors the best article written by a first-time writer in *The Asylum* with the Jack Collins Award and its accompanying cash prize. The winner for 2018 is Alan Workman, whose article of reminiscences about a venerable numismatic bookseller, “Fred Lake: A Bookseller’s Retrospective” was published in the Spring 2017 issue. The other literary recognition, for Best Article published in *The Asylum*, is the Joel J. Orosz Award. We have the unprecedented situation of Joel J. Orosz reporting on the 2018 annual meeting, in which it was announced that Joel J. Orosz was named the winner of the Joel J. Orosz Award. The winning entry was actually an installment of the occasional column, ASSOCIATIONS: Autographs, Annotations, Inscriptions, entitled “Numismatique du Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis”; it was also published in the Spring 2017 issue. It may be appropriate to add that Joel J. Orosz is both humbled and honored to have received this recognition from his fellow NBS members.

One highly respected NBS tradition was not (as has been true for the past three years), bestowed in 2018: the George Frederick Kolbe Award for Lifetime Achievement in Numismatic Literature. On the other hand, two new awards were presented, perhaps bidding fair to become a new tradition for the Club: The Numismatic Bibliomania Society Award of Appreciation. The Awards went to John Nebel and to Bruce Perdue. Here we turn over the reporting to Wayne Homren:

Once upon a time, the NBS didn’t have a website. Practically no one in the world did, because the World Wide Web was still new in the 1990s. But thanks to John Nebel’s generosity and assistance, the American Numismatic Association did have a site. John’s company, Computer Systems Design, offered web hosting and development services, and helped the ANA to get online. The ANA, backed by John, extended an offer to host web pages for its member clubs. At the time, I was working in the software field and wanted to learn about building web applications. So, I tried my hand at creating a set of web pages for the Numismatic Bibliomania Society. It worked, and later, John offered separately to host domains for member clubs, and coinbooks.org was born. Over the past twenty-some years, John has always been there for the NBS, helping out with every upgrade we’ve ever made to the website and *The E-Sylum* archive, writing scripts still used each week to generate

the issue and update the archive. Even as *The E-Sylum* archive swelled the NBS site to more than 25,000 individual web pages, John was always there to make it possible, and never charged a dime for his services. What else can we say but THANK YOU! Without John's quiet, steadfast support, the NBS surely would not have the vast and robust online presence that it enjoys today.

Early in the days of *The E-Sylum* and the NBS website, Bruce Perdue emailed me with an offer to help out. We gave him an account and access to the website files, and before long, he was our full-fledged webmaster. I'm not sure that he bargained for that role in the beginning, but he embraced it with gusto, graciously updating the site with every request from myself or the NBS Board, including nearly weekly nitpicky requests to fix typos in *The E-Sylum*. Alongside John Nebel, Bruce has been right there to assist with every website or *E-Sylum* upgrade, making sure that the technical i's were dotted, and that the t's were crossed. He's learned on the job, picking up new skills to help with styling the web pages, and most recently, updating every webpage for proper display on today's mobile devices. I know that, as *The E-Sylum* Editor, I'd be lost without his assistance. When I finally send him an issue each Sunday night, I'm exhausted, and done for the day. But Bruce picks up the baton and makes sure that the issue gets cleaned up and is properly posted on the website so that readers can access it on Monday morning. Lately he's been formatting the ANA Edition of *The E-Sylum* for delivery to members of the American Numismatic Association. Again, what else can we say but THANK YOU! Bruce has been right there with us on this journey, week in and week out, as dependable as the sunrise.

Taking the narrative back from Wayne, we can all agree that the NBS owes a tremendous debt to both John and Bruce, heretofore unsung heroes who have made it possible for the Club to enter, and keep pace with, the rapidly evolving exigencies of the digital age. These first two NBS Awards of Appreciation could not have been more appropriately bestowed.

The next order of business was the report on the NBS Board meeting. Len Augsburger, pinch-hitting for NBS Secretary-Treasurer Terry White, began with the Treasurer's report, which continued NBS's tradition of financial solvency. This was largely due to a generous \$10,000 gift from the Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society, \$5,000 in licensing fees for *The E-Sylum* from the ANA, and approximately \$7,000 from the 2017 NBS benefit auction. The Club's current cash position of \$24,000 (not including the 2018 benefit auction proceeds), will leave the NBS, after all obligations are met, with a projected balance of \$16,000 at the end of this calendar year. The Board has identified a structural issue—annual dues are not sufficient to cover annual expenditures—and is working to cut costs, beginning with complimentary memberships, in order to keep the Club in a positive cash position. The great success of the 2018 benefit auction will certainly be helpful in keeping the NBS solvent in 2019.

Len also reported on the Board's desire to incorporate the Numismatic Bibliomania Society as a tax-exempt corporation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal

Revenue Code. The NBS should qualify under this section because of its educational purpose. Gaining this tax status would allow a donor to the NBS to deduct up to 50% of the gift from his or her federal income tax return. Currently, the NBS is an unincorporated association, and as such, charitable gifts to the Club are not tax-deductible. Achieving 501(c)(3) status, therefore, would likely increase the Club's income from charitable giving. Chuck Heck, a CPA by profession, will help President Harrison in the process of seeking an IRS determination of charitable purpose, and then 501(c)(3) status. The first step is to incorporate in a State, and since the NBS has bank accounts and an Employer Identification Number in Ohio, the incorporation will take place in that State. If all goes well, the IRS will issue a provisional determination letter, and later, a final letter attesting the NBS's 501(c)(3) tax status.

The Board also decided to purchase Officers and Directors Insurance for \$765 per year, and to begin consideration of appropriate ways to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the founding of the NBS (as dated from the informal organizational meeting held in St. Louis early August of 1979). The first step agreed to was to expand the third issue of *The Asylum* (the issue coincident with the NBS Symposium and Annual Meeting.) with additional material, primarily historical. Other ideas to celebrate the Ruby Anniversary of the NBS will be considered and adopted well in advance of next year's Annual Meeting.

All of this action and activity left very little time for the tradition of a speaker at the Annual Meeting, but David Fanning proved a triple threat, for he not only cataloged the benefit auction and served as its auctioneer, but also closed the meeting as the speaker, with his topic being the current state of the numismatic literature market. It is no secret that the market had softened in recent years due to the increasing availability of information, generally accessed without cost, on the World Wide Web. David, however, noted that over the past year, the market was firming up, and with the sale of NBS Past President John W. Adams' collection of auction catalogs, it showed highly encouraging strength. At the moment, Russian literature is not as strong as it was five years ago, but Chinese, ancient, and foreign literature in general are very solid. The U.S. market had been spongy, in David's opinion, partially due to self-fulfilling prophecies (collectors eschew purchasing books because they might lose value, and sure enough, when enough collectors make decisions on this basis, the books lose value). The recent strength in the market, capped by the Adams sale, has put an end to this defeatist attitude, and David expects the market to remain healthy as the hard copy/electronic balance reaches a new equilibrium.

Thus ended the 2018 Annual Meeting, and we hope all reading this will attend the NBS's 40th anniversary Annual Meeting, in August of 2019, in beautiful downtown Rosemont, Illinois.



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WomenInNumismatics.com

Founded in 1991, WIN is the premiere organization for women in the field of numismatics.

As a nationally incorporated nonprofit, our chartered goals are to encourage fellowship and learning through networking and social events, as well as offering educational seminars, scholarship programs, and our semi-annual literary publication, *Winning Ways*.

President Charmy Harker is leading the board in a revitalization of WIN, focusing on expanding membership and providing social-media platforms for members to connect, discuss, and promote their brands.

Collector or dealer, novice or expert, we invite you to join us in the largest and most respected organization for Women In Numismatics.

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Regular Membership \$25

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Payable January 1st each year • *Please enclose check with your application*
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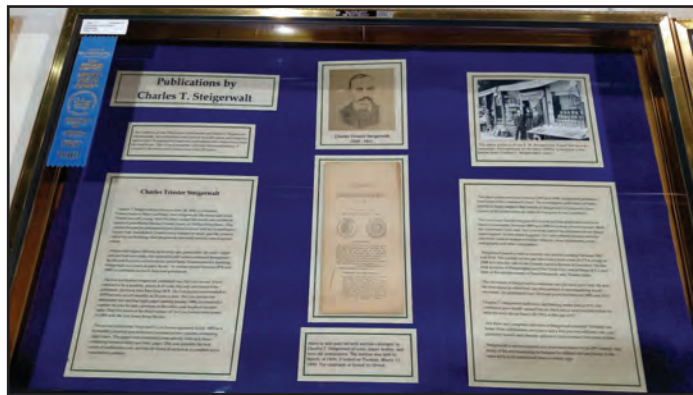
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Signature: _____

Date: _____

¹ Significant Other to a Regular Member ² Age 18 or Younger

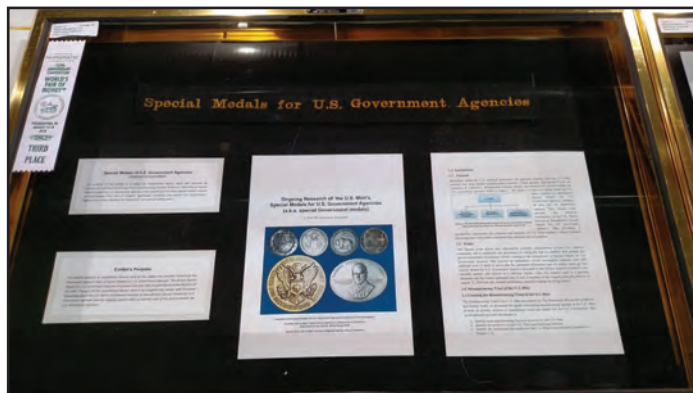
Numismatic Literature Displays at the World's Fair of Money



1st Place: Publications by Charles T. Steigerwalt

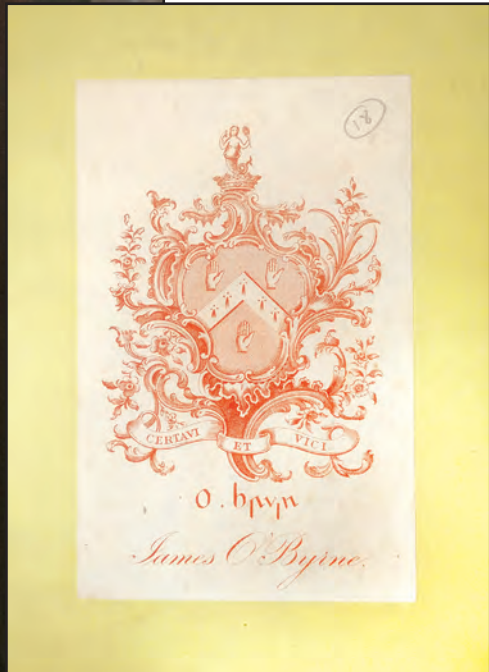


2nd Place: Buy the Books for the Coin



3rd Place: Special Medals for U.S. Government Agencies

Photos courtesy Wayne Homren



John Yonge Akerman's *Coins of the Romans Relating to Britain*

By David Pickup

I ought to start with an apology. I encourage people to write their names in books and date of acquisition as well. It adds something to the volume and gives writers like me something to write about. This time I am looking at a copy of a book called *Coins of the Romans Relating to Britain* by John Yonge Akerman. Akerman is a bit of a hero of mine. He started the first numismatic society and wrote quite a few books about them, not only general works but more specialised ones such as this. He lived at a time when interest in archaeology and history was increasing. Railways made it easier for men (it was mainly men then) to get together and talk about coins.

I need to apologise because although this book has a bookplate and three signatures on the title page it is missing mine. I do not remember when I bought it or how much I paid. Probably about 30 years ago and about £20.00. My volume has been repaired but now the spine is a bit battered.

The bookplate is in the name of James O'Byrne which is printed in what looks like an Irish script and a rather impressive coat of arms. The motto on the bookplate is *Certavi et Vici* and a quick look on Wikipedia shows that is the motto for the Irish Byrne clan meaning "I have fought and conquered." The name has been traced back to the ancient Celtic chieftain, Bran mac Máelmórda, King of Leinster, deposed in 1018. I wonder if he collected coins?

There was a James O'Byrne who was a Liverpool architect and lived 1835 to 1897. He was an avid book collector and some of his books were sold by Christie's in the 1980s.¹ According to the *Edinburgh Evening News*² on his death he left a sum of between £40,000 and £50,000 to the Roman Catholic Church and his collection of coins, medals books and curios worth £20,000 to the Catholic Collage at Walthew Upholland. It is now closed but was a Roman Catholic seminary. £20,000 would be over £2 million now so a fairly impressive collection. (I love the word "curio" here. It means all the junk we collect which is not technically a coin or a book but we like it.) According to the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*³ he left an estate of £107,335 and property worth £60,000 left to the Roman Catholic bishop. His collection was dispersed in the 1960s on their behalf at Christie's.⁴

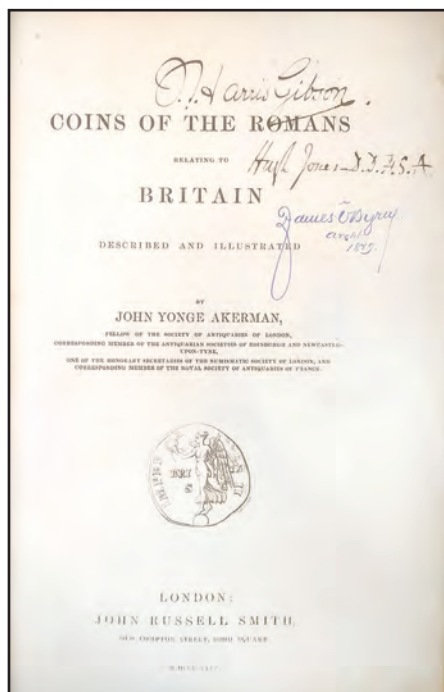
James O'Byrne's signature is the bottom of the three on the title page. The first is signed J Harris Gibson. He was a member of Numismatic Society of London from 1876 to 1884 when he resigned and then 1887 to 1893 on his death.⁵ He too lived at Liverpool and was coin and war medal dealer. He was the editor of the *Journal of the Liverpool Numismatic Society*. He died in 1893 but his numismatic library had been sold in 1883.⁶

The next signature is Hugh Jones DD FSA. DD stands for Doctor of Divinity which suggests a clergyman and FSA stands for Fellow of Society of Antiquaries.

Being a common name that owner is harder to identify. The book is dedicated to John Lee. He was a lawyer who inherited an estate in Buckinghamshire. He had his own museum, observatory and he dedicated his life to total abstinence from alcohol.

On some pages, there are pencil circles with diagonal lines on them. Perhaps they were coins one of the owners of the book possessed.

I had better sign it before I forget. It is a useful volume and has obviously passed through several owners, all different but linked by an interest in old coins (and curios).



NOTES

1 Hugh Pagan Online, *James O'Byrne's Architectural Books*

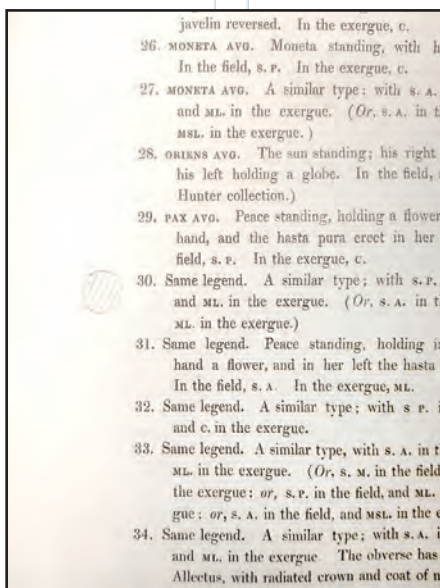
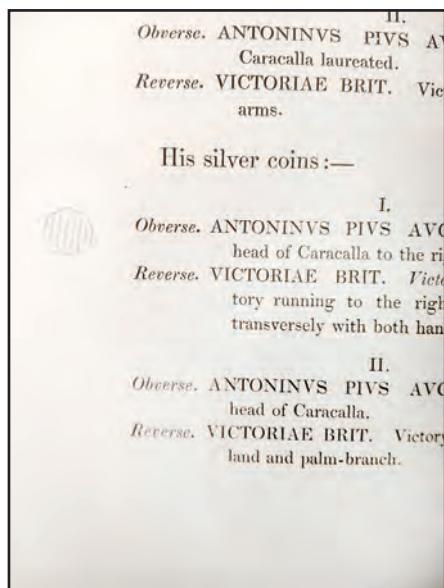
2 1st February 1898 p 4

3 Wednesday, May 18, 1898; pg. 8; Issue 13369

4 Manville, (2009), *Biographical Dictionary of British and Irish Numismatics* London Spinks.

5 Carson R A G, (1986), *A History of the Royal Numismatic Society 1836-1986*, London RNS

6 Manville



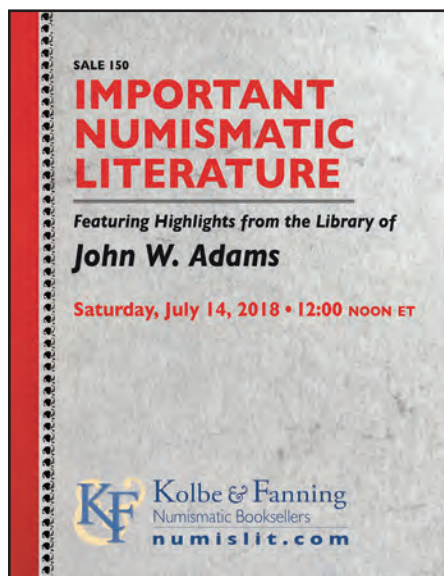
The John W. Adams Sale: A Personal Account

By Jeff Dickerson

My first thought upon reading the May 20, 2018 *E-Sylum* announcement that the John W. Adams library would be sold by Kolbe & Fanning in sale number 150 in July was joyful anticipation. My second thought was that I was woefully unprepared. While a number of wonderful libraries had been sold during my short five years as a numismatic bibliophile, the Adams library in particular, with its core focus on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century auction catalogues, would be the first for which every lot was a contender for purchase.

Once the catalogue was available online, I registered to bid. I immediately began reviewing the lots in the app on my phone. Each successive lot seemed like a “must have” for my own library. I strolled through the Chapmans, the Elders, the Frossards, the Lows, the Raymonds. Had I won the lottery in the interim, I might have tried to purchase every lot in the Adams library and not felt bad about it – except to lament the loss of the journey in building a set, and the journey is most of the fun. But I hadn’t won the lottery, and so I was faced with some difficult realities. For starters, I was confronted with the possibility of blowing out perhaps several years’ worth of library budget. However, I opted not to sacrifice several future years of enjoyment of this hobby and decided on a considerable but comfortable budget.

The sale also forced me to do some deep soul searching about the direction of my own library. I have a few projects within my library – goals that I would like to achieve on 5, 10, and 20 year plans. My resources are respectable but certainly not adequate for too broad a scope. I needed to focus. I couldn’t possibly acquire every lot I wanted, even those that were within my budget. What strategy should I employ? There were a number of lots that represented good value. I have tended to focus on these during big library sales because I expect the blue-chip lots to draw the most attention. Why not try to pick up the overlooked lots for myself? However, this sale presented so many once-in-a-generation lots that I feared not getting another opportunity for



some time. I decided to focus mainly on the items which might not present themselves for decades.

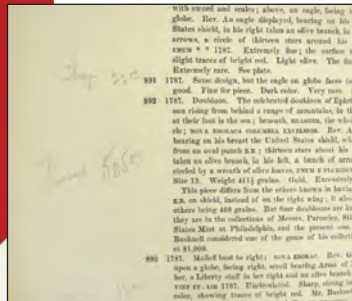
I also needed to establish some rules for the sale. Auction fever is a real thing and I have experienced it myself, as I imagine all readers of this tale have done as well. Such an important sale would certainly invite such bids. Therefore, I established a few ground rules:

1. Research every lot where a bid might be contemplated.
2. Don't bid on any lot without an established maximum bid.
3. Don't get emotional.

With these rules in mind, I began researching the sale. After the paper copy of the catalogue arrived in the mail, I circled my lots and wrote out my maximum bids. By this time the online bidding had already eclipsed some of my bids, and so I took the opportunity to focus on different lots. Most of my research had been on the scarce/rare plated Elder sales, but I found a few additional neglected lots elsewhere in the sale.

After several weeks, the date of the sale finally arrived. I awoke fairly early in the day, had some coffee, and did a bit more last-minute research before settling in at 11 am to begin the auction. Most of the first several lots in the sale were not from the Adams library and fared modestly. Lot 5, the very nicely bound deluxe copy of John W. Adams and Anne E. Bentley's *Comitia Americana and Related Medals: Underappreciated Monuments to Our Heritage* (from the William A. Burd library) sold for only its minimum of \$550. In another sale I'd have jumped on that lot at that value, but I needed to keep my powder dry for the main event.

The main event soon arrived with lot 23, the first Chapman brothers lot. Early bidding had already gone to \$160, and after a few volleys between two interested bidders, the lot was finally hammered down for \$250 (on a \$100 estimate). This was only a hint of what was to come. The next lot was the plated Chapman brothers' 1879 sale of their own material. Opening at \$500 (the estimate), the bid-



Lot 28, Chapmans' Bushnell Sale, David
Proskey's annotated auction room copy

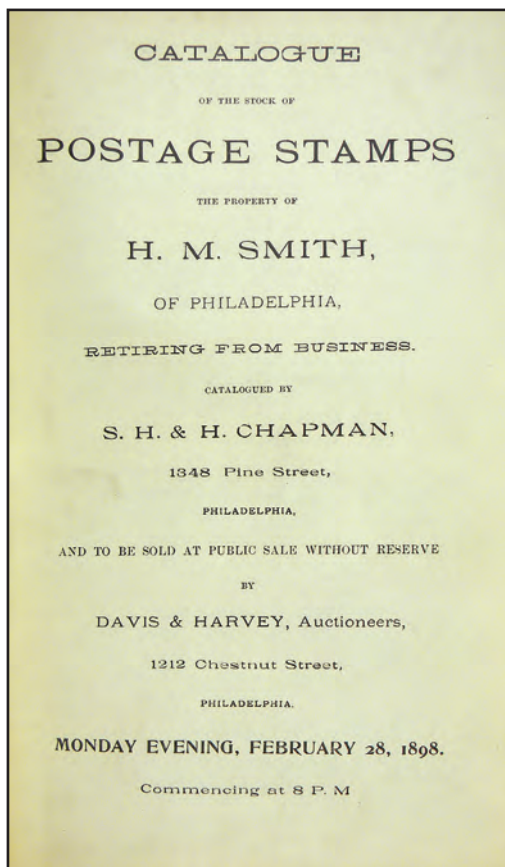
ding continued between two bidders for over two minutes before finally being sold at \$1600.

The next few lots were sold and it was now time for lot 28, the fantastic and unique copy of the Chapmans' Bushnell Sale, David Proskey's annotated auction room copy. Bidding opened at a low \$3,750. This lot was not even on my radar as far as affordability, since I pegged it as a five figure lot. Had it looked like it would go for around its estimate of \$5,000, I would have just bit the bullet and bid for it, rules be damned. Alas, I was not afforded such an opportunity. A few bidders and the "floor" quickly got the catalogue up to \$10,000. Several exchanges later, the lot was finally sold for an astounding \$17,000 (\$20,400 with the premium). I knew the lot was estimated low, but it was still kind of shocking to see that price realized.

Most of the next 29 lots went for multiples of the original estimate, with only a handful going for below estimate. This group contained many scarce and rare un-plated Chapman catalogues. Given that the paddle numbers involved tended to be the same for each lot, it looked like a few bidders were probably trying to complete sets.

Then came lot 58. I've heard stories of powerful live floor bidding in sales of yore. I've never had the opportunity to experience that kind of auction excitement and may never have a chance. Lot 58 was the closest thing to being on the floor of a live auction room as I've witnessed. The lot, a bound set of Chapman catalogues including the rare H.M. Smith stamp sale, opened at \$900, having already surpassed its estimate of \$750 in early bidding. The lot was taken up mainly by two bidders until \$2,000, at which point one bidder dropped out and a new bidder entered. The two remaining bidders continued to exchange bids – up to \$5,000, now up to \$10,000 – at one point the bidding stopped at \$16,000 and I thought it might be over, but the underbidder had just one more bullet to fire at \$17,000, prompting the eventual winner to make a final remarkable bid of \$18,000, which took the lot after nearly four minutes of bidding.

A number of thoughts and



Lot 58



Plate from Lot 88

words came to my mind. “Good Lord” was certainly uttered a number of times as the bids crept up. “This is insanity” was another phrase, although this account has been published in a journal called *The Asylum*, so I should not be surprised by the actions of any of our kind. The main thought that entered my mind, though, was that all my research and careful deliberation about my maximum bids was probably for naught. I was simply outgunned here. I only had a few Chapman lots where I would possibly enter a bid. Most of these had already moved past my maximum bid during the early bidding.

The sale continued, setting what must be record prices for a number of catalogues in the Chapman series. The sale then reached lot 88, a rare plated copy of S.H. Chapman’s Henderson sale. While only a “B” rated sale in Adams, this was a scarce plated version of the sale. The history and current

whereabouts of the known copies was listed in the catalogue, and this indicated to me that those who probably wanted this item already had a copy in as good or better condition. This fact was a major factor in drawing my interest. This was the first lot in the catalogue where I had a maximum bid written down. The lot had reached the live sale without a bid yet. I was hopeful, but given that lot 28 (Proskey’s Bushnell) also opened well below its estimate, I was not too sanguine. After seeing almost every preceding Chapman lot sell for well over estimate, I expected the same, and concerned myself with looking forward to the Elders.

I opened the bidding at \$4,000. Then it was quiet. 10 seconds passed and I continued to utter my favorite phrase in such situations, “hammer time!” Had I won the lot at such a price, I would have probably just called it a day – my luck would surely not hold up. However, another bidder jumped in and pushed it to \$4,250. That was to be expected. I quickly countered at \$4,500, and bids were exchanged up to my bid of \$6,000. No more bids were forthcoming...last call...hammer time! Indeed, I had won. Dear reader, I cannot express the sheer joy I felt at that moment. Arms raised, a loud “Yes!” proclaimed my victory. I can no longer claim to be a “little guy” in this hobby, for surely \$6,000 for a single item is playing in the big leagues. But the way things were moving in this sale, I expected to walk away from this sale almost empty-handed. This win excited me so much that I almost forgot to bid for my next lot, number 90, a plated Simpson sale. I did get my bid in though, but the lot soon moved past my maximum. I didn’t care. I had won my prize two lots earlier.

The remaining Chapman sales were sold at more modest levels than the early lots, several selling around the minimum. Had the bubble already been deflated? Perhaps this boded well for the Elders, the main focus of my research. A several lot “inter-regnum” passed between the Chapman and Elder lots, and I braced myself for some tough competition.

I had identified 9 lots for bidding in the Elder section, most of them rare plated sales. I had already consumed a good chunk of my allocated budget for the sale in a single lot, so I had to be careful and stick to the rules. The first Elder item, lot 123, was his first mail-bid sale, and opened above the \$500 estimate at \$550. If the experience of the early Chapman sales was any indication, I expected this lot to quickly jump into four figures or beyond. Three active bidders took the lot up to \$1,200 at which point only two bidders continued the fight. After two minutes of aggressive bidding, the lot was finally knocked down at \$6,500. A similar fate was met for lot 126, Virgil Brand’s copy of Elder’s first plated sale.

Lot 127 was another ex Virgil Brand sale copy, this time for Elder’s plated J.B. Chase sale. Bidding opened at \$2,750 and the same three bidders as for lot 123 were again in competition. As before, one bidder dropped out relatively early and left the other two to duke it out. Bidding reached \$10,000 in due time. The bids continued at a rapid pace as the price eventually reached \$16,000, at which point it was hammered down to the same bidder who had won lot 123.

The sale proceeded with several great lots, a few for which I unsuccessfully bid, and bidder enthusiasm was still very much alive. Lot 133, a bound set that included the rare plated version of Elder sale 37, sold for (an undoubted record) \$17,000 hammer price. The Elder sale 89 (lot 144), possibly the only copy in existence or certainly one of very few survivors, set another record by going for \$17,000 on a \$350 estimate. The sale itself and several of the lots that followed are almost negligible in terms of content but are critical to completing the Elder sale series. If these were coins, they would undoubtedly be considered “uncollectable” and pardons would be made for sets missing them. The goal of set completion must surely have been the factor for the few bidders who took these lots into the stratosphere. I look forward

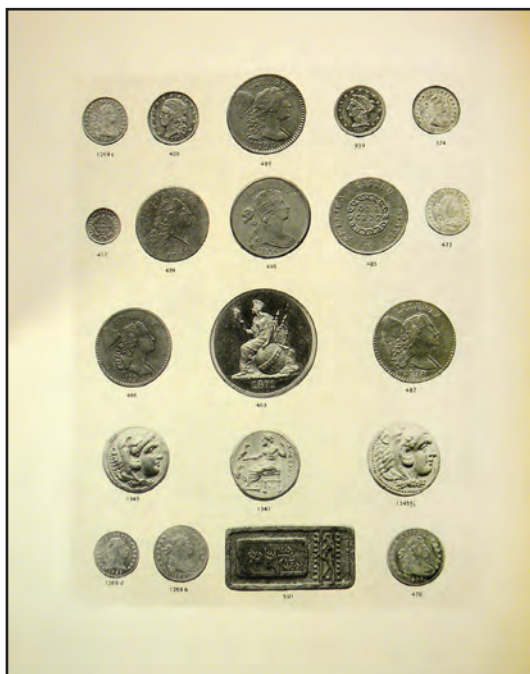


Plate from Lot 127

to seeing a complete set of Elder sales in a future auction. When the Elder sales had come to a close, I hadn't won a single lot but was underbidder for a few. One particular bidder won 38 of the 76 total Elder lots, including all lots of the matched bound set (maroon cloth, black spine label), which I thought was nice since matched sets should stay together if at all possible.

Now I was in a quandary. I had very few maximum bids established for the remaining lots and I felt I should at least pick up a few more items given the rare opportunity that the sale afforded me. I picked up lot 200, the Charles Fisher sales, thinking it best to get them all at once rather than attempt to fill holes over the course of years. When the Frossards came up, I contemplated bidding just for value. Several similarly (though not all identically) bound collected sale sets were probably worth a minimum bid just for the cost of binding alone. There was less intense bidding on these lots, and several sold for below the estimate. However, I had not done enough homework on these lots, so I abstained. The most significant price achieved was for lot 218, a nicely bound collection of Frossard sales which included plated versions of sales 90 and 97. As in the case of the Chapman and Elder sales that came earlier in the auction, the usual suspects were engaged in the bidding war. This time, however, the bidder who had dropped out early in lots 123 and 127 remained to the end and won the lot at \$20,000, which was also the maximum hammer price achieved during the sale. The remaining Frossard lots were sold closer to ground level.

I had used the time during the sale of the Frossard and subsequent lots as an opportunity to look at possible lots coming up later in the sale. Of course I had my Adams and my Davis at hand, but was also equipped with the Champa, Bass, and Ford library sales. If I needed to research any upcoming lot, I needed to do it quickly. Chalk this up to being unprepared with research on the later lots in the sale, a mistake I will not make in the future. One can never know what fate will deal.

I had identified the set of Katen sales (lot 244) as a good value item. I had bought a less complete set in an earlier Kolbe & Fanning sale, but I was willing to pick up the duplicates, especially since the bulk of the lot value (in my opinion) was in the Adams-annotated Wylie hoard sales. I ended up winning the lot at the opening bid and look forward to seeing what valuable information the annotations provide.

The Low material soon came up, and the first lot (number 252) offered another exciting journey. This lot was a single bound volume and two loose items containing a number of Low fixed price listings and other publications. Two bidders took the lot to a final price of \$14,000, another astounding accomplishment. Lot 255 consisted of a uniformly bound set of most of the Low sales, and probably represents excellent value at its price of \$8,400 with the premium included.

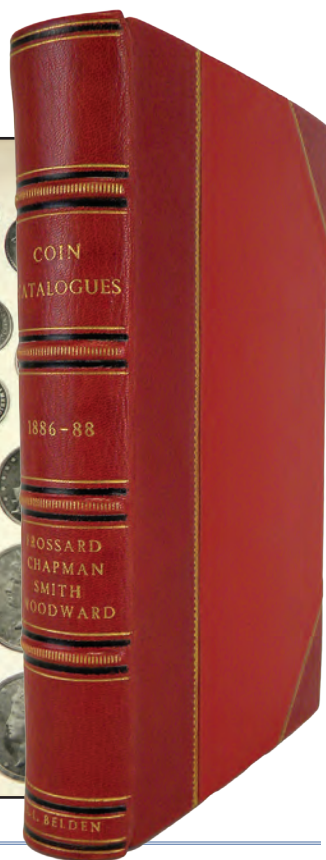
As the Wayte Raymond lots began to appear and then the U.S. Coin Company sales, I took note of the more modest bidding. Several Raymond sales exceeded the estimate, but most of the U.S. Coin Company lots sold for at or close to the minimum. There was probably a good deal of value acquired in these lots. As part of my somewhat hasty research, I had identified lots 304 (a plated Malcolm Jackson) and 323 (a plated H.O Granberg) as potential candidates for purchase if bid up to the estimate. This was a matched set from the Charles B. Fine library. My luck held up and I was able to obtain both items for below the estimate, keeping them together for another

generation.

I watched patiently and a bit exhausted as the sale drew to a close. It had been quite a marathon up to that point, as I had been sitting and watching for over five hours. One does not walk away from a sale such as this. However, there was one more lot that had entered my radar. This was the penultimate lot, 367, which included a number of sales bound together. These sales included Woodward's plated Vicksburg II sale as the main attraction, but also contained the three Frossard Russian Collection sales (including the plated version of Frossard's sale 69), the Chapman McCoye and Friesner sales, and the H.P. Smith Berlin Collection sale. I had noted early in my research that this lot had come from the Bass library, but I had neglected to price it. Part of my scrambling during the last group of lots in the sale was to find the sale in the Bass library and determine a rough price to pay, given the interim (very tasteful) re-binding. I located my deluxe copy of Kolbe sale 78, which contained the lot. I turned to the back of the sale to check the PRL. Gasp! No PRL. I remembered then that my deluxe copy was missing this document. I knew my unbound copy had the PRL but where had I put that copy? It was too late to find it, so I had to rely on instinct. All of the Frossard and Chapman sales contained in this volume had appeared earlier in the present sale and sold over estimate. I also found that a Vicksburg II sale had sold in the third Champa sale (lot 2677) for about \$1,000. Using this information, I figured any bid even a little beyond the estimate would be well advised. The lot finally arrived on the block and opened with a floor bid. I battled the floor for a few volleys until I finally won the lot for a \$1,000 bid, the estimate. While the plated Henderson sale provided me with the most exciting moment of the day, the sale of lot 367 provided me with the most contentment. It was a wonderful ending to a remarkable sale, and I only had to bend my rules a little.



Lot 367





The frontispiece to the Thomas Winthrop Streeter library catalogues.

In Memory of a Man I Never Met: William S. Reese (1955–2018)

By David F. Fanning

It seems a little strange to be mourning a man I never met. William (Bill) Reese died recently, after a lengthy but quietly fought illness, at the young age of 62. Readers of *The Asylum* may be unfamiliar with Reese, though I am certain there are some who knew of his work. He wasn't a numismatist, much less a specialist in numismatic literature. He was a bookseller focused on Americana: that broadly defined field of study that encompasses everything from the earliest travel narratives of Europeans encountering this hemisphere to directories of small towns you've never heard of.

Saying that Bill Reese was an Americana bookseller is a ridiculous understatement, however. He was number one. Without peer. Whoever is second on that list lives distantly in his shadow. He was a once-in-a-lifetime phenomenon. Reese managed to combine scholarship with salesmanship, intellect with passion, accuracy with humor. His catalogues—over 350 of them—are simply a joy to read for anyone even mildly interested in the subject. Reese was a model bookseller who had many imitators but little in the way of real competition.

A pet peeve of mine is lazy cataloguing, especially the sort of lazy cataloguing that assumes that one needn't waste any effort on actually *selling* the item being offered. The sort that assumes the presence of a buyer and makes no effort to make the reader *want* to buy the item. The cataloguer's job, I feel, is not only to accurately describe the proffered item, but to discuss its importance and quality in such a way as to educate the readers and instill in them the desire to own the item. Reese was marvelous at creating a spark of enthusiasm in the reader and nurturing it to become a flame.

Reese had other qualities I admired. His knowledge of his field was comprehensive. He consulted the appropriate bibliographies assiduously and corrected them where needed. It was obvious that when he was confronted with something new to him, his response wasn't to just wing it and hope for the best but to learn about it and then share what he learned. The reader of his catalogues was always learning, and it



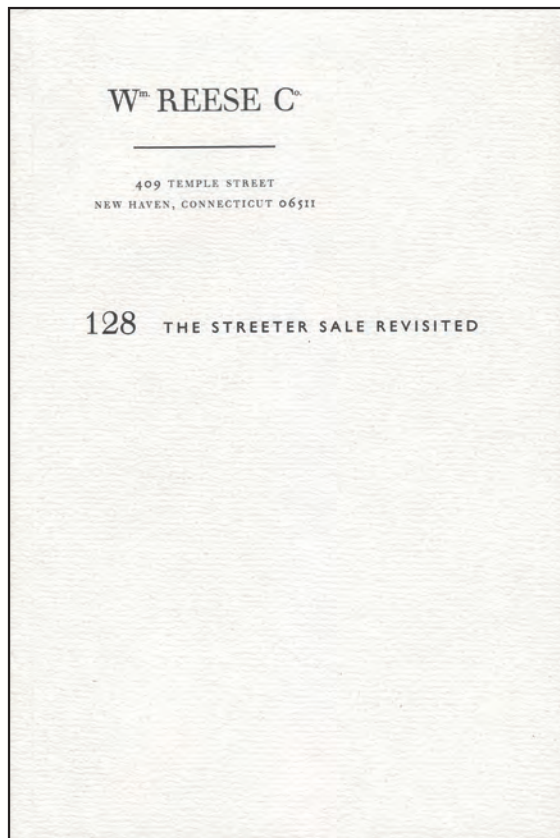
William Reese (1955–2018)

was obvious that Reese himself never stopped learning.

It was also obvious that he developed his customers, working with them to make ordinary collections extraordinary. And the books he offered were also extraordinary. To take one example, there are currently listed on his company's website two copies of a book I own in my own library, an early Cincinnati publication of some importance. One copy is a nice, complete copy similar to my own and is available for \$1450. The other was presented by the author to Thomas Jefferson and can be yours for \$75,000. Bill Reese always had nice books, but he also had extraordinary books.

All of these qualities would make me like any cataloguer. But what I loved about Reese's work was that he could combine all the scholarship and bibliographical rigourousness with a sense of humor. My favorite bookseller joke is in a wonderful catalogue of his called *The Streeter Sale Revisited*. The Thomas W. Streeter sale was conducted by Parke-Bernet Galleries in seven installments from 1966 to 1969. It is the most important sale of Americana of the twentieth century. In *The Streeter Sale Revisited*, Reese offered 380 items, all of which were present in the Streeter sale and some of which were the actual Streeter copies. Item 292 in the catalogue is a fairly obscure Mexican publication written in defense of the Pious Fund established with the Jesuits to spread Catholicism in the Americas. In Reese's description, he notes that this item, which was Streeter's copy, had been in his stock since 1975. He writes, "I've had it in stock longer than any other Streeter sale item, and plan to keep on raising the price until I find a buyer." I just love that. And I bet it sold, too.

I always assumed I'd eventually meet Bill Reese. Why wouldn't I? It's sad to think that won't happen now.



Reese's catalogue *The Streeter Sale Revisited*.

Numismatic Shop Talk

By Myron Xenos

After 56 years in what can only be referred to as numisaddiction, I've come to the conclusion that we all cease to speak English upon the moment we register and step onto the bourse floor. Thirty years ago an IRA agent questioned the term "bourse" that I used for a client's tax expense, so I have used "show table fee" ever since. Terms like SVDB, CC/O, Split bands, Full bell lines, Silly Head, Booby Head, Bearded goddess, War nix, Two bits, Chop-mark, Stella, Ragpicker, Flying eagle, Full horn, Barber coin, Potty dollar, Bus half (Hmm), Lazy deuce, Star note, VAMS, Conjugate bust, Blue book, Red book, Gray sheet, Green sheet, Proof eagles, Black eagles, just to name a few, make "outsiders" scratch their heads.

Let's admit it; next time you attend a coin show, listen carefully to the conversations around you and hear them in the context of a newbie to the hobby. We all know that coins mean different things to different people. You may be a collector, dealer, vest-pocket dealer, investor, a precious metals fan, an accumulator, or you might consider the whole thing an industry. Whatever you are, remember that the guy or gal standing next to you may not be there for the same reason. On a darker note, that person might be a thief, a pickpocket, a counterfeiter, or a light-fingered Louie. On the lighter side, people around you might collect ancients, colonials, coppers, busties, rags, mercs, topicals, cartwheels, literature, bullion coins, foreign crowns (not the kind you put on your head), state quarters, errors, tokens, medals, ephemera, counter-stamps, or a myriad of other areas of collecting. This leads me to lingo I have heard over the past half century. Some are funny, some serious, some unbelievable, and some are "What did he say?" Whatever the case, they will make you think. So if your spouse says, "I'm going shopping," you'll understand.

- ___ On a scale of 1 to 70, it's a 71.
- ___ You're buying color, not condition.
- ___ I got some XF Threes for 1,800 each.
- ___ It's a blast white, you'll need sunglasses.
- ___ What's melt today?
- ___ How did you glue on the S?
- ___ A roll of '45 full split bands? I don't think so.
- ___ I remember when...
- ___ It ain't phony, it was my grandfather's.
- ___ This coin is a real blazer.
- ___ I cracked it out and it came back 67.
- ___ I buy cults, not washers.
- ___ It's a ragpicker's dream.

- __ Look what I cherried out of a junkbox.
- __ They're 10 bucks each, 2 for 25 bucks.
- __ I cleaned it because it looked dirty.
- __ What is a VAM?
- __ BU for you, AU for me.
- __ I said slider, not slicker.
- __ Did you buy that in China?
- __ Sorry, 43 coppers aren't magnetic.
- __ Walter said it was real!
- __ Too bad, your 1913 nickel is a Buffalo.
- __ I'm not joshing, your 1883 is a gold-plated nickel.
- __ Slab 'em and sell 'em.
- __ Buy the coin, not the plastic.
- __ What's the pop report on this puppy?
- __ This coin has our name on it.
- __ So it's 100 years old, so is my uncle.
- __ Did you say cash?
- __ I got a top-pop SVDB, trade for your Beemer?
- __ My coin is an MS-30.
- __ That's not rust, it's patina.
- __ They were minted in XF.
- __ Only Grandma cared what Grandpa had.
- __ I have a coin dated 350 BC.What's it worth?
- __ What weighs more: a pound of feathers or a pound of gold?

1 to 10... You are a novice
 11 to 20... You enjoy the hobby
 21 to 30... You have been around
 31 to 36... You take this seriously
 All 37... You take this too seriously

There are many more, but this is enough for one day.

How many make sense to you?

